

Stepping Out

by Richard Harris

1 Mavis — adult

Female

2

3 *(Mavis, an ex-professional dancer, volunteers to give lessons*
4 *to a group of middle-aged women — and one shy, reclusive*
5 *man — in a local church hall north of London, England. The*
6 *weekly tap dancing class is a series of outrageous mishaps*
7 *and missteps for the aspiring performers, and the self-mocking*
8 *Mavis has quite a task at hand in trying to rehearse this crew*
9 *for a grand charity show performance!)*

10

11 Okay, everyone, let's get on, shall we? It's our first
12 rehearsal, so lots of concentration, yes? *(Indicating)*
13 Rose, Sylvia and Andy — we'll take you three at the
14 back — no, Rose in the middle please. Then we'll have
15 Maxine, Vera, Lynne and Dorothy — spread yourselves
16 out so you can be seen. But come forward a step, you're
17 crowding — and Geoffrey, let's have you at the front,
18 directly in front of Rose.

19 Okay. So you're standing with your backs to the
20 audience ... *(She will demonstrate, turning her back to*
21 *them.)* Feet apart, and absolutely perfectly still —
22 nothing moving. The curtains or the lights come up or
23 whatever and you stay there, not moving, absolutely
24 static still. For four counts you do absolutely nothing.

25 On given counts, back line, middle line and Geoffrey
26 turn around and face the front. No, you don't move your
27 feet and so your legs are crossed ... From there you
28 bring the right arm up, leaving the left arm down, you
29 lift the hat and you hold it high — yes? On counts three

1 and four, line of four does exactly the same thing but
2 when you turn you leave the right arm down, holding the
3 hat low. Incidentally, there's going to be some fast
4 bouncing around and you might have bust troubles, so
5 wear something good and firm, yes? *(Generally)* Right.
6 We'll have the first four bars and make sure the intro is
7 spot on — it's got to be good, it's got to have panache,
8 it's got to have the three T's. What are the three T's?
9 Tits, teeth and tonsils.

10 *(Demonstrates)* You smile, you stick your chest out,
11 you look like you're enjoying it. You've only got two T's,
12 haven't you, Geoffrey? Okay, let's have you in your
13 opening positions and we'll try it again. Quick as you
14 can, please Rose, we've got to get through! Dorothy —
15 just a little smaller ... Sylvia, can we get rid of the gum?
16 I want to see your teeth, not hear them! All right? And
17 it's five six seven eight ... Da da da dada da for nothing.
18 Da da da dada da back line ... Da da da dada da middle
19 line ... Sway, sway Geoffrey! Okay. I think the problem is
20 that when you turn, some of you are a little off balance.
21 Right, back into position please and we'll do it again —
22 other way round please, Sylvia — and it's five six seven
23 eight. *(Demonstrates)* Then ... shuffle ball change, shuffle
24 ball change shuffle ball change, six tap springs and hold.
25 Right. Now, let's try it to the music!

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35